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Monsieur Pierre

a

Pathetic Drama



Class PS 991

Book A1 M6

PRESENTED BY

Parlor Plays for Home Performance.

MONSIEUR PIERRE.

A PATHETIC DRAMA

IN

THREE ACTS.

NEW YORK:
HAPPY HOURS COMPANY,
No. 1 CHAMBERS STREET.

1895-2

MONSIEUR PIERRE.

CHARACTERS.

MONSIEUR PIERRE.

ALGERNON.

MRS. BARKER—*His Mother*

MARY.

STEPHANIE—*Her Maid.*

COSTUMES.

Monsieur Pierre should be dressed in very old clothes, and should wear a heavy mustache, slightly grey, which may easily be managed with the aid of a little flour. The other characters may wear ordinary morning costume, though Mrs. Barker may be a trifle *outré* in her dress, and Stephanie will find that a small stiff curl on each cheekbone will give her a very Frenchified appearance.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

In spite of the ridicule commonly attending pathos on an amateur stage, I have ventured to present the following Play to my readers' notice, hoping that, in some places at least, it may be considered worthy of representation.

The scenery is supposed to represent a garden. This may be managed without difficulty. A few flower-pots, a stray wheelbarrow, with spades, water-pots, etc.; one or two garden chairs, and something green on the floor (a green carpet or a bit of green baize), will be quite enough; and as to the gate, a common sheep-hurdle between two screens will perfectly convey the desired impression.

With regard to the acting, all that is wanted is a gentleman pretty well *au fait* with the French language.

Expt.
M. A. Hildebrand
Mar 11 '19

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MONSIEUR PIERRE.

ACT I.

SCENE.—*The Garden in front of Mrs. BARKER's Villa. ALGERNON and Mrs. BARKER discovered. Mrs. BARKER sitting on a garden-seat. Gate in back-ground.*

Mrs. Barker. Algernon, do you know what is the day of the month?

Algernon. Don't I?—rather! It's my birthday.

Mrs. Barker. It is. And you are just about to enter the army. But I fear you will never be able to pass your examination, until you know a little more than you do. Would that you were as well instructed as I am! I don't believe you could tell me who Queen Elizabeth's father was?

Algernon. Yes, I can. Wat Tyler.

Mrs. Barker. Come, well, I'm glad to find you do know something, at all events. And who was—

Algernon. Oh! bother lessons! I mean to have a holiday to-day. What's the use of having a birthday, if a fellow mayn't do what he likes! I shan't work to-day.

Mrs. Barker. Indeed, my dear Algernon, you must. There is no time to be lost. In fact, I have appointed Mossoo Peer, a very superior gentleman, very superior, I believe, though I have not seen him,—to give you a little instruction in French this very day.

Algernon. Mounseer what?

Mrs. Barker. (*Stopping her ears.*) Good gracious! Where did the boy pick up that abominable accent? "Mounseer!" Oh! And my ear, thanks to the fifteen months I spent at the pengsi-ong at Koolong-soo-Mair, is so very remarkably sensitive, that—Now, my dear Algernon, try and imitate my accent, and when

Mossoo Peer arrives, as he soon will, make him a low bow, and say, "Commor voo potty voo, Mossoo,"—like that.

Algernon. No, I shan't.

Mrs. Barker. Now, Algernon dear, to oblige me.

M. PIERRE appears, looking over the gate.

M. Pierre. Taking off his hat). Pardon, Madame, voulezvous avoir la bonté de me dire où est ce que demeure Madame Barkarre?

Mrs. Barker. (Astonished.) What is the man talking about?

M. Pierre. I you entreat, forgive. I am quite étranger. Know nosing of ze plaice, nosing votever. I come to teach la langue Francaise to M. Algernon, le fils bien aimé de Miladi Barkarre.

Mrs. Barker. Who are you?

M. Pierre. (Drawing himself up proudly.) Moi, je suis le Ba— (Pauses.) But no, I vos forget. You may me call Pierre, Monsieur Pierre.

Mrs. Barker. Oh! Mossoo Peer! (Jumps up.) Ongtray, je voo pree, ongtray. Je swee sharmy de voo vwaw.

Algernon. Well done, mother. Go it, ye cripples!

Mrs. Barker. For shame! Algernon, you naughty boy. Come here, sir, at once, and speak to Mossoo. Mossoo, I am Mrs. Barker, and this is Algernon, your pupil. (PIERRE bows.

Algernon. I say, Mounseer what's the current price of frogs in your part of the world? Eh?

M. Pierre. Mais, je ne sais pas. But, I know not.

Mrs. Barker. Be quiet, you silly child. He is a good boy, Mossoo, but his spirits are high. You will understand me if I speak English? Voo comprenny se je parley Onglay, nest paw?

M. Pierre. Ah! parfaitement, Madame (Aside.) Beaucoup mieux que l'autre.

Mrs. Barker. Beang. You understand how necessary it is that my Algernon should be a proficient in French; so I should be glad if you would lose no time in beginning the course of instruction. I have had extraordinary advantages myself in acquiring a true Parisian accent. Why, I was fifteen months at a pengsiong at Boolong-soo-Mair.

M. Pierre. Vraiment, Madame!

Mrs. Barker. Oh, yes! I wish Algernon had my accent. But

you can judge for yourself what chance he has of ever getting one. Algernon (*giving him a book*), just run your eye over that little French poem we were reading together, and let Mossoo hear presently how well you can pronounce the words. Keep away from the gate. You will have plenty of time to talk to Mary after lessons are over. There is a young lady, Mossoo, a little ward of mine, over the way there, who is always trying to distract my boy's attention from his task. Now, bong jure, Mossoo, O revwaw. (*Exit MRS. BARKER. M. PIERRE sits down. ALGERNON takes the book behind, and lies sprawling on the ground.*

M. Pierre. (*Talking to himself.*) Ah! the remembrance will to me always be. Vy can I nevare forget? But it is that. Her face, so kind, so enchanting, so ravishing, will ever be to mine eye. And it is so many years since it I have see. And then for ze last time. *Oui, elle est morte,—morte,—morte.* On her bed of death she to me say, "*Pierre ne m'oubliez, jamais, ni la pauvre petite qui ne connaitra jamais sa mère.*" And I, for my part, had not to say von word. *J' étaie desolé.* (*Covers his face with his hands.*

Enter MARY, looking over the gate.

Mary. I say, Algy.

Algernon. Hello, Polly darling! What's up?

Mary Here's an apple for you. Catch. (*Throws him an apple, which he catches.*

M. Pierre. And how have I kept vot she to me enjoin? I have lost ze leetel child. But not for ever. No, no. I shall her see again von day. *Et pour le present*—for ze now, I shall vork, *toujours, toujours, zat ven ma petite Marie* and I are togedder, she may vant for nosing, nosing at all.

Mary. I'm coming in.

Algernon. All right, come along.

Mary. I say, Algy, who's that?

Algernon. That! Oh, he's nothing. Only a chap who thinks he's going to teach me French. Never mind him. (*Lets her through the gate.*

M. Pierre. Ah! how she vos beautiful! *Une ange, une vraie ange!*

Mary. Who is he talking to?

Algernon. To himself, I fancy. He's been at it ever since my mother went in. What an old muff he is!

M. Pierre. But I vill to my vork. (*Turns and sees MARY.*) Ah! *qui est la?* (*Excitedly.*) Come here, zat I may see you face. Ah! (*Seizes her by the arm. ALGERNON interposes.*)

Algernon. Come, I say, Mounseer, none of that. Just you let my Polly alone, will you, or I'll give you one for yourself,—come now.

M. Pierre. *C'est toi, Marie c'est toi.* It is thou, thou, my angel! Thou who hast again return to revisit me!—Thou! thou!

Algernon. Drop it, Mounseer, will you. Polly, ducky, you'd better hook it. I'll settle this chap.

Mary. Good-bye then, Algy. (*Exit through gate.*)

M. Pierre. (*Excitedly.*) She is gone!—gone, as before. And I—I shall her again see—ah! nebare!—She is to me once more dead. Ah! it is cruel, cruel! (*Wildly.*)

Algernon. Look here, Mounseer. I'm not at all the fellow to stand this sort of thing. That young lady belongs to me; and I won't have any of your foreign jabbering over her, I can tell you.

M. Pierre. She's is gone!—gone!—gone!

(*Falls prostrate. ALGERNON stands over him, looking bewildered.*)

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE.—*The same. ALGERNON supporting the head of M. PIERRE on his shoulder. M. PIERRE is recovering from his swoon.*

Algernon. That's right, Mounseer. Keep your pecker up. Do you feel better at all?

M. Pierre. (*Looking around him.*) *Où est ele?*

Algernon. Quite well, eh? That's a trump! Now, suppose you sit up a bit; for you're not a feather weight on a chap's shoulder, I can tell you.

M. Pierre. (*Mournfully.*) *Elle n'est pas ici.*

Algernon. Easy, you think it, do you? You must have a rum notion of ease.

M. Pierre. (*Sitting up, sadly.*) *Mort, mort?*

Algernon. (*Rubbing his shoulder.*) Not if I know it, Mounseer,—no more for me.

M. Pierre. (*Observing ALGERNON for the first time.*) *Ah ! je vous remercie, Monsieur Algernon. Merci beaucoup.*

Algernon. I suppose the poor old beggar thinks I'm going to pitch into him, that he goes on holloaing out "Mercy." Oh ! don't you be in a funk, Mounseer, I won't hurt you.

M. Pierre. *Ecoutez donc.*—I vill to you my sad history relate. It is now many year ago,—many long sad onhappy year—zat I have to England come. *Ce pays sitriste si malheureux. Et pourquoi?*—and for why? But I vill to you *raconter*. Vin I vos young, there present herself to *mes yeux une si belle—si ravissante*,—one so beautiful, so rapturous, she to me seem *une vraie ange*,—vot you call a right angle,—I tumble into love *à l'instant*, to the instant. My *passion* she vos return. Madly, not possible to restrain itself. But she,—*ma belle Marie*,—had von *papa*. He vos proud and angry. He to consent refuse. Vot could I do, could ve both do? To vait, *c'était trop de la misère*,—it vos too much of ze miserable. *Enfin nous sommes mariées*,—on an end ve vos marry.

Algernon. Well done, Mounseer! Just what I'd have done long before.

M. Pierre. I have not to you mention zat I vas ze Baron de Beaulieu? Yes, it vos so. But my land, my house, all my, vot you call propriety,—vos gone. All swallow up in ze great *Revolution*. *Et me voilà, Baron—sans terre!*—Me behold, Baron—vith no land.

Algernon. Baron in name, and barren in land, eh? Not bad that, for a Frenchman. (*Aside.*)

M. Pierre. *N'importe*,—no importance. Marie and I, ve vos happy. *Son papa*, he soon die, but be nevare forgive. He vill avay all *son argent*,—his silver,—to his oder daughter, and ve vos leave to starve. Still, still ve vos happy.

Algernon. Happiness under difficulties! Hurrah! never say die.

M. Pierre. *Enfin*, at last, ze day come. I vos von fader, *moi-même*. Ah! how ze moder and I did love our leetel baby! She vos so vite,—so leetel,—so—*Aimez vous enfants, M. Algernon!* Love—a—you ze babies?

Algernon. Babies! What, I? What do you take me for, Mounseer? Nasty little squalling brats.

M. Pierre. *Ah! mais celle-ci*,—but this here,—she nevere cry, —oh! nevere, nevere. She so good,—so tranquil. She lie in de arms of her moder, and smile—ah! how she smile! *C'était trop de félicité*,—ve vos so happy, so ver' happy! (*Pauses smiling, and then resumes.*) Then come ze sorrow. *Ma belle Marie*,—her whom I love so much,—she die. (*Weeps.*)

Algernon. (*Aside.*) Poor old buffer! What hard lines for him! (*Aloud.*) I'm awfully sorry for you, Mounseer.

M. Pierre. Thank you, my dear young friend, thank you von million times for your sympathy. It is long time since this occur, but ze memory is still fresh. Vile she vos alive I vos too happy, too happy. I thought zat my joy vos like von rock,—but no, it vos sand, all sand, nosing but sand. (*Shakes his head mournfully.*) Since she die I have nevere laugh.

Algernon. Poor old chap! Well, what did you do next?

M. Pierre. I did turn to my leetel girl,—my leetel Marie,—to me console. But she vos ill. She vont food,—she vont physic,—she vont everysing. And I—I had nosing to give. At ze last I determine to part vith her. It vos one terrible blow; but it vos done. I take my child to her aunt, who vos rich, and I say, "Take her, if you please. I vill myself go away, and vork, vork, vork, always vork, till I make ze money to pay you for your care;—and den *Marie et son papa* vill live togedder, nevere to part." Zat is vot I say: but *hélas!*—dis vos also sand, nosing but sand.

Algernon. How so?

M. Pierre. I you tell. Ze money vos made, I make my return to *la belle France*. I go to ze aunt's house. Vot do I find? ze aunt,—she vos dead; and Marie—*ma petite Marie*—she vos gone—nobody knew vare! I have nevere seen her since that time. But ven I looked upon *cette demoiselle*,—zat young lady who vos here just now,—my heart give von grate big jump! I sought it vos my leetel Marie—my leetel girl. But no, it vos not.

(*Shakes his head sadly.*)

Algernon. What a rum thing! Her name's Mary, too.

M. Pierre. Zen I sought it vos my vife. But no, *elle est morte*. And I sall nevere see her again. *Peut-être la petite sera morte aussi? Ah quelle idée!—Mais, hélas! c'est possible.* Ah! if I

sought dat, I vould hope, I vould pray, zat I too might soon die, and leave zis cruel vorld, vich is all sand, and go away, away, away,—to live for ever vith those whom I love.

(M. PIERRE *raises his hat, and stands*. MARY *looks in over the gate*; and ALGERNON, *pointing at PIERRE, puts his finger on his lips to enjoin silence*. *Curtain falls slowly*.)

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE.—*The same*. M. PIERRE, ALGERNON and MARY *discovered in the same positions as at the close of the last Act*.

M. Pierre. (*Replacing his hat*.) But I am dreaming. I must to my vork return. Vere is my pupil? (*Turns and sees MARY*.) Ah, my dear young lady, *entrez je vous prie*. I am quite calm now; you have nosing to fear of me. (*He takes her hand, and leads her through the gate. After which he stands holding her hand, and looking sadly at her*.) Ah! she is like,—so like. But I vill not again forget myself. (*Bends over courteously to kiss her hand. He starts*.) Ah! *mais qu'est ce que c'est ca?* Vot is dat? Zat ring—vare you get it?

Mary. Don't be so wild about it; you frighten me. I don't know where the ring came from, but I've had 'it on my finger ever since I can remember. Stephanie says it was my mother's.

M. Pierre. Your moder!—*mille pardons, Mademoiselle*,—but who she vos?

Mary. I don't know. She died long before I can remember. But, really, sir, I didn't come in here to be questioned by a stranger. And, as I don't see what possible business you can have either with my mother, my ring, or myself,—I shall take the liberty of wishing you a very good morning.

(*Tosses her head, and approaches the gate as if going*.)

Stephanie. (*Outside*.) *Mademoiselle Marie!*

Mary. *Me voici, Stephanie*.

Stephanie. (*Appearing at the gate*.) *On veut savoir, Mademoiselle, si vous auriez la bonté de—* (*She observes M. PIERRE, and starts*.) Ah! *c'est M. le Baron!*

M. Pierre. (*Starting*.) Vot is dat?

Stephanie. (Wildly.) Mademoiselle! Mademoiselle! vous connaissez ce monsieur là, n'est ce pas? M. le Baron! embrassez donc votre fille.

M. Pierre. Vat?—I no onderstand.—I—I—ma pauvre tête, my poor head,—how she swim. I—ah! zank you, M. Algernon. (Sinks into a chair which ALGERNON gives him.) Pardon, Madame, vot you vos saying?

Stephanie. Vous ne me connaissez pas, M. le Baron? C'est moi,—Stephanie,—la bonne!

M. Pierre. (Bowing dreamily.) I am ver' glad to make you' 'quaintance, Madame.

Stephanie. (Distractedly.) Ah! il est fou! Ah! le pauvre Baron! Quoi faire? quoi faire? (Enter MRS. BARKER.) Ah! voici, Madame Barker! Vite, Madame, vite, vite, je vous prie! M. le Baron de Beaulieu est fou.

Mrs. Barker. What! the Baron of Booloo!—him!—Lor! who'd a thought it?

Algernon. I say, mother, perhaps you can explain this; for Mary and I can't make head or tail of the business.

Mrs. Barker. Oh, yes. I can explain it all, and will, if you'll listen, all of you. Mossou le Barong, je swee quite delighted to make your acquaintance. Mary, my dear, come here. This is your father.

Mary. My father!

Mrs. Barker. Yes, your father, my love. Algernon, run in and fetch the sherry; Lord Boloo is a little ill. (Exit ALGERNON.) I am afraid, Mary, your papa is hardly well enough to understand the story now, but you will tell it to him afterwards. (Re-enter ALGERNON with the sherry.) Here, take a glass of this, Baron. (Pours out a glass of sherry and hands it to M. PIERRE, who sips it.) Now I will explain. When your mother died, Mary, you will perhaps remember that her sister, your aunt, took charge of you. She unfortunately died also not long afterwards; and, having been unable to discover your father's whereabouts before her death, she left a letter for me, whom she had known when we were schoolfellows together at a certain pengsiong at Boolong soo-Mair,—requesting me to take charge of you until he came to claim you as his daughter.

Algernon. Here is a start!

Mary. This is my papa, then. (*Goes over to M. PIERRE, and stands with her hand on his shoulder.*)

Mrs. Barker. I little thought, when I engaged this gentleman to instruct my Algernon in French, that he would turn out to be the very identical French nobleman I have been so long looking for. Oh! and I forgot to say, Mary, that your aunt left you all her money; so you and your father are wealthy people now. Why, the Booloo estate alone,—which your aunt bought, and has left to the Baron,—must be a good thousand acres, and of first-rate land, too.

M. PIERRE. (*Dreamily.*) Tousand—tousand—acre.

MRS. BARKER. A good thousand, I assure you, Baron. But you have plenty of money besides that. And your daughter is about twice as rich as you are.

M. PIERRE. (*Rising slowly.*) My daughter! Who say my daughter? Vare she is? *Ma petite Marie*—ah! but you are she?

MARY. Papa, dear, dear papa!

M. PIERRE. And have I you found? At last! at last! oh, it is too much—too much of joy! Let me you regard. (*Takes her by both hands, and looks in her face.*) Yes, yes, dere is no mistake; you are my leetel child. You. From ze first moment I you see, someting give von grate jomp in my troat, and I feel—oh! how I feel. Now we are togedder vonce more,—*moi et ma petite*,—ve sall nevere be divide again, *n'est ce pas, ma cherie?*

MARY. Never again, dear papa. But——

M. PIERRE. But vot?

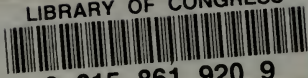
MARY. We may stay here, may we not? I—(*looking shyly at ALGERNON*) I don't want to go away.

ALGERNON. No, I should think not, I'll tell you what it is, Mounseer, I can't give up Mary. You must either stop here, or take me to France with you. That's flat.

M. PIERRE. Ah, dat is flat! *Très bien*, very well, as you would. Zat ve shall by-and-by settle. For ze moment I am so happy, so ver' happy, zat I can sink of nosing else but *la petite Marie*. (*Turns to the audience.*) If I could, I should like to say something to you. I should like to say, "Tank you, *mes amis*," but, you will pardon me, will you not? for I cannot. I am so ver' happy. (*Stands, holding MARY'S hands, and smiling at her. Curtain falls.*)

CURTAIN.

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